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JEAN BRENNAN
Chairman
1978

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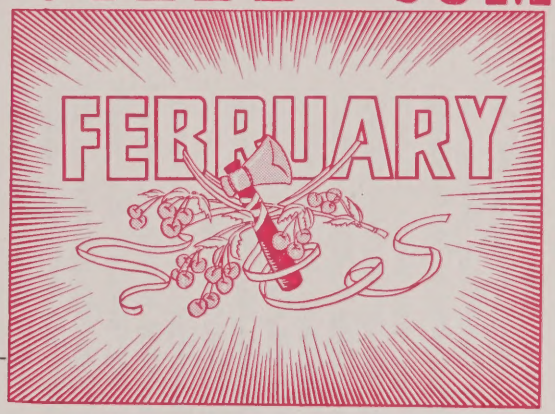
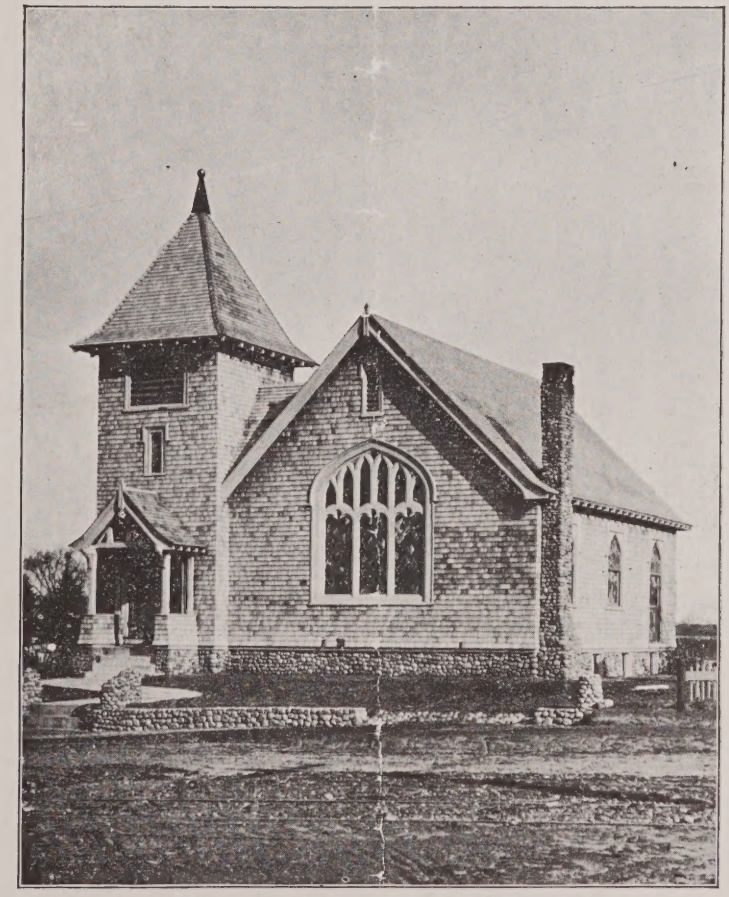


Dedication of the Baptist Church
North Bellingham, Mass.



Sunday, March First

One Thousand Nine Hundred Eight. Ten Thirty A. M.

LEON JERMAIN BRACE, Minister

Compiled for the Framingham Baptist Association up to January 1, 1901

HISTORY OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

NORTH BELLINGHAM

The church in North Bellingham has had an uneventful history, and offers little material for the historian beyond the records of ordinary church business. The written records begin with the organization of the Baptist society in 1847, but the memory of one or two living witnesses enables us to trace back the history sixty years, to a Sunday school which was begun in 1833.

For many years the school met in a small building, the greater portion of which was occupied by the village store. Devotional meetings were occasionally held here and in private houses, but no regular preaching service was maintained. The need of better accommodations for the Sunday school, and for religious meetings, had long been felt, and to meet this want the proprietors of the woolen mill in the village, Varnum J. Bates, for many years a deacon in the First Baptist Church, Providence, and Noah J. Arnold, erected the building now used by the church. It was dedicated October 19, 1847. It is of two stories, the lower story devoted to business, the upper floor provided with pulpit, pews and the usual furnishings of a chapel. The building is still the property of the manufacturing company.

Immediately after the dedication of the chapel "The North Bellingham Baptist Society" was organized; its object, as stated in its constitution, being, "To supply the same with an evangelical preacher of Jesus Christ." From this time regular preaching services were maintained, sometimes every Sunday, and sometimes every other Sunday; but the records do not show who were the

preachers, except that, in 1853, Rev. Otis Converse occupied the pulpit, and Rev. E. Warner in 1855.

For twenty years preaching services and Sunday school were maintained by the society, but the time had come for an advance movement and on the 13th of October, 1867, the members of Baptist churches residing in North Bellingham held a meeting for the purpose of organizing a church. Rev. H Fittz, being present, was chosen moderator. A church was constituted with the following members: William Hunter, Roswell Bent, Ann Bent, Elizabeth Hunter, Mary Hunter, Jane Hunter, Barbara Hunter, Rebecca Bemis, Matilda Murphy. At the same meeting John B. Phillips, Stephen F. Coombs and Hiram Hunter were received as candidates for baptism, and on the Sunday following they were baptized by Rev. Samuel Hill. Two weeks afterward two more were baptized and the Lord's Supper was administered, for the first time.

On the 20th of July, following, a council convened for the formal recognition of the church. The churches in Bellingham, Woonsocket, Sheldonville, North Wrentham, (now Norfolk), West Medway and Holliston were represented in the council. Rev. J. T. Massey was chosen moderator, and Rev. Samuel Brooks, clerk. After mature deliberation it was voted: "That we consider it wise to recognize the church here formed, as a regular Baptist church." The services of recognition were as follows:—

Recognition Exercises of the Baptist Church in North Bellingham, Mass.

Invcoation, Rev. A. W. Carr.

Reading of Scriptures, Rev. J. W. Holman.

Prayer, Rev. C. D. R. Meacham.

Sermon, Rev. S. L. Holman.

Prayer of Recognition, Rev. J. T. Massey.

Hand of Fellowship, Rev. S. Brooks.

Charge to the Church, Rev. H. Fittz.

Concluding Prayer, Rev. D. Rounds.

On the 4th of September, 1869, the church voted to apply for admission to the Worcester Association, but, after a few days, the vote was reconsidered. A year later the application was made and

on the 28th of September, 1870, the church was received into the Worcester Association. This relation continued three years when the church withdrew and united with the Framingham Association.

For the first six years the church had neither pastor nor stated pulpit supply, but depended, most of the time, for preachers upon the students in Newton Theological Institution. In August, 1873, Rev. H. F. H. Miller began to serve as acting pastor, but without coming to reside among his people. His services, of which the records make appreciative mention, continued until the end of the year 1876, a little more than three years.

Soon after the close of Mr. Miller's labors the supply of the pulpit was placed in charge of Revs. H. Fittz and J. Tilson, missionaries of the State Convention. Though usually sending others to preach they came several times themselves. The brief service of Mr. Tilson in the Autumn of 1877, resulted in a precious revival, in which nearly a score of people seemed to be hopefully converted, eleven of whom were added to the church.

The letter of the church to the Association in September, 1878, speaks of the year as the first decennial of the public recognition of the church, recounts the goodness of God to them, reports eleven baptisms and a membership increased from the original nine to forty-four. It also says, "One of the greatest needs of our church at the present time seems to be the want of pastoral labor, which it has never yet been our lot to have, though it is our earnest prayer that the near future may reveal to us some plan whereby we may see our way clear to accomplish an end so desirable." But the church was destined to wait five years more before this want could be fully met.

Soon after the revival in 1877, upon the death of Rev. Hervey Fittz, the church took the supply of the pulpit into her own hands, and sought preachers, usually, among the students at Newton. Occasionally a student would render extended service, spending vacations upon the field. The memory of these faithful workers is still cherished.

On the 2d of April, 1882, Rev. E. D. Bowers was called to the pastorate of the church. He accepted the call and, on the first day of June, was publicly recognized as pastor. Thus, after remaining shepherdless nearly fifteen years, the little flock now, for the first

time, knew what it was to have a pastor, actually residing among them and devoting his whole time and efforts to the building up of the church. On the first Sunday in July the new pastor had the pleasure of welcoming ten new members into the fellowship of the church, nine of whom he had recently baptized. The church greatly enjoyed the privilege of pastoral leadership, and the labors of Mr. Bowers were very much appreciated, but the relation was destined to an early termination, for, on the 15th of July, 1884, the pastor tendered his resignation, which the church reluctantly accepted.

Rev. D. A. Wade, pastor of the church in Bellingham, three miles distant, was now invited to supply the pulpit, and, after six months, by request of the church, he assumed pastoral charge, dividing his time between this church and the one in Bellingham. Mr. Wade entered upon his work with much zeal, and the church prospered under his labors. During his pastorate, in 1889, Rev. O. D. Thomas, evangelist, held revival meetings with the church in Bellingham, in which North Bellingham shared, the people going in barges to attend the services As a result of these meetings the church was quickened and seven added by baptism.

After serving nearly six years, on August 31, 1890, Mr. Wade, to the great sorrow of the church, presented his resignaton. His successor was Rev. E. F. Mitchell, who was pastor also at Bellingham. His pastorate continued to June, 1892. On the 25th of September following, Rev. L. Drury, the present pastor, who had accepted a call to the church in Bellingham, was invited to assume, also, the pastoral charge of this church.

Throughout its history the church has labored under many disadvantages, has been small in numbers and weak in financial resources; but she has ever remained loyal to the truth, and the Great Head of the Church has owned and blessed her labors. During the twenty-six years of her church life, sixty have been baptized into fellowship, one of whom, Rev. Joseph McKean, is now a minister of the Gospel. Her present total membership is fifty; resident members, twenty-six. Those who have served as deacons are Roswell Bent, Justin E. Pond and George H. Greenwood; the first named has continued in office to the present time. The clerks have been, Stephen F. Coombs, Roswell Bent and Elbridge Grant,.

the last named now holding that office. Roswell Bent has held the office of treasurer continuously from the organization of the church.

The years from 1893-1901 have been filled up with the usual church activities. The regular preaching services have been kept up: work in the Sunday school has been prosecuted. Seasons of quickening and refreshing have been enjoyed, faithful laborers have toiled looking for and receiving the Master's blessing.

Mr. Drury resigned the pastorate in April, 1898. Mr. Herman of West Medway served as pastor one year. Mr. Fraser, a student from Brown University, served the church from June '99 to August 1900. Mr. Graybiel of West Medway entered upon his work in September of the same year.

Thus, though without any very marked changes, the work of Christ has been carried steadily onward with many tokens of His favor.

Church history will be concluded in a later issue.

Old fashioned card of the early 1900 's

Remember how your heart throbbed even faster when Valentine's day rolled around with thoughts of that SPECIAL ONE ??

Try this one for "Roots" and may it induce you to let us know what your genealogy reveals--Learned that a recent arrival in this world and Town of Bellingham last January has a surprising array of ancestors. John Michael Mahoney, Jr. descended from eleven of the 1620 Mayflower passenger list. Also descends from the famous Willard line beginning with Major Simon Willard who helped found Concord, Massachusetts. In this line he is connected with Archibald Willard, famous painter of "The Spirit of '76" and with his nephew, Theodore Arthur Willard, noted inventor of the storage battery that makes possible the electrical power in our cars. Then in another branch he is related to the famous clock makers in Grafton and Roxbury with Simon Willard as the most famous. Then through marriage long ago he is related to Edward Rawson, Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, who, in 1685, became owner of "Rawson's Farm" in which is located Caryville, North Bellingham and--Crimpville. Then through another branch he is a direct descendant of Walter Cook of Mendon who was among the early settlers of that Town in 1664. This puts him in line with Deacon Nicholas Cook, who, in 1737, founded the First Baptist Church of Bellingham and earlier in 1719 was one of the founders of our Town. The Burr and Staples family from whom young John descended are large land holders in Town. This follows in line with Rawson who had 1840 acres. It is most significant that the past is repeating itself and that it is done by descendants of prominent early settlers. Already young John has celebrated his first Birthday in January 1978. That'll teach him a lesson learned long ago by us Senior citizens that "time" is a fleeting and elusive culprit given to rushing by when we want it to stand still while on the other hand it seems to stand still as we wait impatiently for it to go faster for a special event to occur! We congratulate young John for his "tree" and may he be another important cog in the gears of history--that is, Bellingham history.

Also in line with Solomon Willard, designer and builder of Bunker Hill Monument! Top that one if you can.

MARBLEHEAD, MASSACHUSETTS
"THE SPIRIT OF '76," also known as "Yankee Doodle," described as the most inspiring patriotic picture in America, hangs in the Town Fathers' meeting room in ABBOT HALL. Painted by A. M. Willard, it was presented to the Town in 1880 by General John Devereux, whose son was the model for the drummer boy.

"the Spirit of '76"

Abbot Hall — Marblehead, Mass.

The harassed-looking young western city couple brought their small brood aboard the bus and settled down in seats near the rear. He began reading a newspaper while she tended the baby. Their rowdy four-year-old was running up and down the aisle. Just then an earthquake rocked the bus.

Without even looking up from his paper, the father yelled at his son:

"All right, you, cut that out!"

☆ ☆ ☆

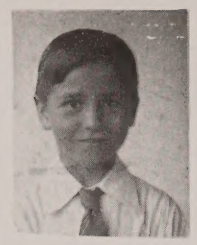
It's better to give than to receive and, where advice is concerned, it's easier.

☆ ☆ ☆

Ralph Berardi

Virginia Potter

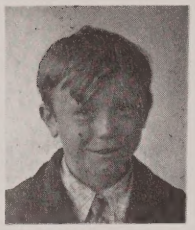
Helen Kinnear


Vincent Rogowski

Patricia McMahon

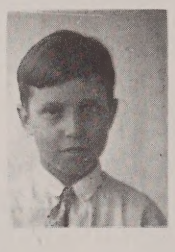
Evelyn & Esther Berardi

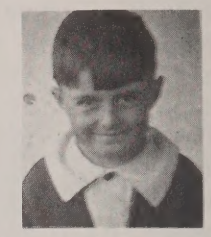
Rose Potter


Raymond Jastrzembski

Walter Rogowski

Marie Dore


Michael Berardi


Norman LeBlanc

Walter Nadolny

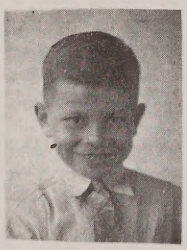
Edward Gorman

Alice Wilde

Thomas Berardi

Raymond LeBlanc

John Drapeau



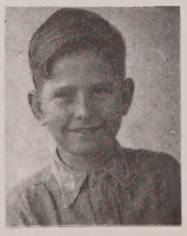
Guy Stoddard

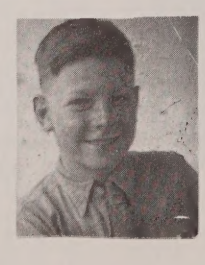
Lillian Guyette

Pauline Kinnear

Roger Drapeau

Jeanne Fagan


Alfred Fitzpatrick


Charles Fitzpatrick

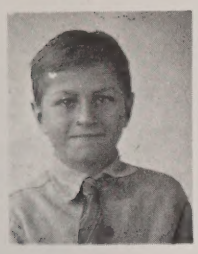
Frances Kinnear

Frieda Melrose

Walter Lewinski

Remember These ?

How can we ever forget that this is the Birthday month of George Washington and "Honest" Abe ?

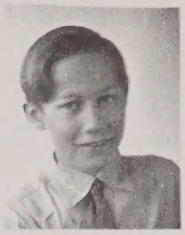


Harold Evers

Jeanne Currivan

Eileen Buckley

Theresa Drapeau



James Janiszski

Clair Foley

Richard Guyette

Mildred Pleau

Victor Glowka

Eunice Foley

Anna Jastrzembski

William Spear

Winter

George Washington:
My observation is that whenever one person is found adequate to the discharge of a duty by close application thereto, it is worse executed by two persons, and scarcely done at all if three or more are employed therein.
—The Washington Papers,

Orlando DiPietro writes: "Many thanks for mailing me the"Crimpville Comments". Most enjoyable and interesting--you're doing a wonderful job." (we try.)

From the Van Notes-Maine: "We are so delighted with the 'Comments' and save every one of them! Keep them all in a stack this high from the beginning in 1973."
(In many small ways and a few big ones, Bellingham has a unique heritage that we are proud to inform you of.)

God made man
Frail as a bubble;
God made love,
Love made trouble,
God made the vine,
Was it a sin
That man made wine
To drown trouble in?

NORTH SCHOOL

GRADE 8 1937 & 38

WINTER

Helen Buckley

William Buckley

Norman Belcher

Janet Brown

Wyman Cook

Lenore DeJony

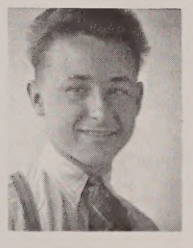
Irene Drapeau

Clair Fitzpatrick

Mary Foley

Clair Guyette

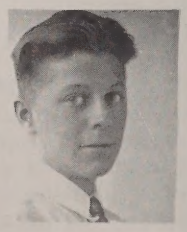
Shirley Hunter



John Kozak

Wilfred LeBlanc

Eugene Lemire



Charles Michalowski

Frances Naughton

Emil Pouliot

George Sarakin

Pictures Contributed by Florence McCracken